

There are 39 Wayne County High School seniors being inducted into Academic Hall of Fame this evening at the high school, so we congratulate those seniors!

WCHS Sophomore Sophia Beaudoin qualifies for both Gatton and Craft Academy

Wayne County High School Sophomore Sophia Beaudoin is most likely the first local high school student to be accepted to two different college academies in order to finish her high school career.

She applied to Western Kentucky University's Gatton Academy and Morehead State's Craft Academy and was accepted to both. She immediately selected the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science, which is the first program of its kind in the state of Kentucky. She felt the most comfortable at WKU's facilities and dorms, after having already toured there.

The mission of the Gatton Academy, established in 2007, is to serve bright, highly motivated students in a two-year residential program for gifted and talented juniors and seniors. The Kentucky students are full-time WKU students with an interest in pursuing advanced careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics which matches Sophia's ambitions.

Only two other students from Monticello have had the privilege of attending the Gatton Academy in the past – Monticello High School Student Tori Pulsifer was the first and Monticello High School student Sarah Angelle graduated from Gatton during the local merger. Since then, Wayne County High School scholars Caleb Rose, Natalie Hutchinson, and Cole Bell have had the honor of attending the Craft Academy.

Sophia, is a unique teenager who has the courage to follow a different path that would not be the easiest for the average person. But, the 15-year-old daughter of Amy and Joseph Beaudoin, is anything but average. She is looking forward to raising the playing field for herself, so she can stretch her intellectual abilities and make a difference in this world.

She will have an associates degree when she graduates from Gatton, which is designed for high achieving high school students. She will also gain a high school degree from Wayne County High School at about the same time.

"I'm not switching schools," said Sophia. "I'll still be enrolled at Wayne County High School."

She will graduate in two years from both her hometown high school and the Gatton Academy where she will live in a dorm with her peers and attend college classes mostly with students in her program. She appreciates the opportunity to study abroad and possibly do research projects through the Gatton Academy. She will have intensive language courses over the next two years.

Sophia is a straight A student and is currently taking two AP (Advanced Placement) courses - World History and English Language/Composition. Advanced Placement courses offer more rigorous coursework and are very challenging for students. If a student scores a three out of five on the end-of-year AP Exam, they obtain college and high school credit. If they do not pass the exam, they are only eligible for the high school credit.

Wayne County High School English Department Chair Jared Criswell said, "I've really enjoyed working with Sophia. She is not only one of the most intelligent students I've ever worked with, but she also has one of the most unique dispositions of anyone who has ever entered my classroom. She has ideas that she is not afraid to share, explain, and defend with her last breath. I've never known a more opinionated young lady in my entire career, let alone one with the innate ability to defend those opinions intelligently."

Criswell said her writing is always solid and shows a personal and familial commitment to literacy. One can tell that she has been a lifelong reader and that she has absorbed what she has written to the betterment of her own unique voice.

"Though I strongly recommended her for these programs she has been accepted to, I am going to be extremely sad to see her go as I will no longer have a hand in the academic career of such an exceptional student," said Criswell.

Sophia has worked hard to attain a 33 composite score on the ACT. "I studied a lot to raise my score as much as possible," she explained.

She is following the Bio Medical pathway at the high school. "That's the kind of Science I'm interested in," explained Sophia. Her goal is to go into Medical Oncology research. She has toured some of the labs at WKU and noticed one of the labs is devoted to cancer research, so she is excited about that opportunity.

"This area has some of the highest cancer rates," said Sophia. "I don't like that and I want to do something to give back to this area." Sophia has attended Wayne County Schools since preschool and values her community. "I've gotten a good education here, but there is not much left for this school to offer me."

But there are lots of opportunities for local students who have received a solid foundation through public education to advance their learning. For instance, Sophia was selected to be part of the ACTION Program through the University of Kentucky's Markey Cancer Center. This prestigious program offers students interested in Medicine and Biomedical Science the opportunity to do research and gain clinical, outreach and educational experiences in the field of Oncology.

One of the highlights of the first half of her high school career has been the interesting and challenging courses she has mastered through her studies in Science.

"I have had the pleasure of working with Sophia over the course of this year as her teacher in a Project Lead the Way Principles of Biomedical Science class and in a very rigorous

Chemistry class,” said WCHS Science Teacher Kelly Brown. “During this time, Sophia has done exceptionally well and earned the highest grade among her peers in both courses. The Chemistry course is particularly challenging and even my brightest students often struggle with Chemistry. Sophia, however, has soared through the class with more ease than any student I have encountered during my tenure of teaching Chemistry.”

“I recall one particular day when Sophia was absent. I had a couple of students absent that day and I remember making the comment that it was a bad day to be absent as we were covering several difficult concepts. When Sophia returned to school the following day, she asked me to look over her homework from the day of her absence to see if she had done it correctly. To my surprise, she had. I asked her how she knew what to do and she said she just looked at the example problem and figured it out. I was speechless. Sophia truly is a gifted student, but her talents extend far beyond the Science classroom.”

“I have no doubt that Sophia will be very successful in the Gatton Academy and I can’t wait to see what she goes on to do,” Brown concluded.

Aside from excelling academically, Sophia is also involved with numerous activities within her school. She is a member of the Beta Club, and is on the academic team at Wayne County High School. Sophia is also a member of the WCHS Band where she plays flute and last year was selected for the All-District Band and received the Most Outstanding Freshman award. She has particularly enjoyed being in the Drama Club this year where she has played five roles and won the “Triple Casting Award.”

“I do have some great friends here. Especially in Band and Drama programs. Those are great programs,” said Sophia.

She realizes it will be hard to be separated somewhat from friends and family by heading to college early, especially since she has already skipped a grade and is actually a young sophomore. “My parents are not too excited about that, but they know this is the best thing for my education.”

She especially enjoys travel and may have the opportunity to go to England to secure her English 100-101 classes through Gatton. She and her family just returned from Japan through a local school related EF trip facilitated by WCMS Counselor Vicki Davis. In her spare time, she and her mom enjoy keeping foster cats for the Humane Society. She enjoys indoor hydroponic herb gardening, and creative writing.

Wayne County Schools are indeed proud of such an outstanding student accomplishment and are happy to see her soar.

Junior Elora Garner scores perfect 36 on ACT

Wayne County High School is pleased to announce WCHS Junior Elora Garner's perfect ACT score, which is most likely another first for Wayne County Schools.

Garner, the daughter of Jasmine and Nathan Garner, received a perfect composite score of 36, when she took the ACT, which is used to help students get into colleges, receive scholarships, and chart their course for the future.

"What an amazing accomplishment for someone to have a perfect score on the ACT," said Wayne County High School Principal Steve Thompson. "We're so proud of her. Our high school is blessed to have someone like her to represent us in the community. I know she'll do great things."

Elora took the ACT for the first time during the mandated test dates in March, at school. The state requires high schools across the state to administer the ACT locally to their junior class.

She was delighted to learn her amazing results in the mail, but she certainly was not up to bragging about it. "I did not think I had done that good," she reflected. "I told my friends about it in person the next day at school. My Mom sent it out to our family" and that was pretty much the end of the story for Elora.

But this week she has been recognized for such an impressive test result that should greatly impact her future. Her accomplishment was recognized at the Junior Awards Ceremony held in the high school gymnasium in front of her peers, as well as during the Board of Education's student recognition segment.

Elora attributed her success to the advanced classes she has been enrolled in at the high school, as well as a free online practice test, she took before the test. "I've been in college level classes, so that probably helped."

She passed her three Advanced Placement exams last year, after being enrolled in AP English Literature, AP World History Modern, and AP Computer Science. So, she received dual credit, as well as college credit getting a leg up on her post-secondary career. Currently, she has been taking two AP classes - AP Biology and AP Language, as well as two college classes -Math 111 and History 120- both through Campbellsville University. She has a weighted GPA of 4.154 at the moment.

She is not involved in extra-curricular activities but is in the Gifted and Talented program where she has been identified in a remarkable number of subjects including: General Intellect, English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies and Art. In her spare time, she enjoys playing video games with her friends and with her sixth-grade sister Miriam on occasion. She also likes to draw and is an avid reader.

"I've always loved dinosaurs...you might call me a dinosaur nerd," grinned Elora. She especially enjoys reading Science articles online and then "bothering my family with the facts I

know about it,” she said. She mentioned getting to go to the Chicago Museum of Natural History where she got to see dinosaur skeletons. That passion has led to her career ambition to become a paleontologist who studies fossil animals and plants. She explained that there are not a lot of colleges that offer masters or doctorate degrees in that field, but she is looking at majors at Yale University or the University of Chicago.

She would enjoy learning to identify fossils, dig them up and carefully clean them for further study. “There are all sorts of things you can do with fossils once you’ve got them,” said Elora.

“I’m a big fan of Science,” she said. Her success in her classwork reflects her taste.

“I have had the privilege of having Elora in two classes this year- Principles of Biomedical Science and AP Biology and she has performed at the top of her class in both. Elora is very bright, has an excellent memory, and a vivid imagination. She is a perfectionist with a strong attention to detail,” said WCHS Science Teacher Kelly Brown.

Brown recalled, “I met Elora for the first time at this year’s open house back in August. She informed me then that she was a junior and taking my PBS and AP Biology classes. I didn’t recognize her from the halls as I do most students who come in as juniors. Even if I don’t know them personally, they at least appear familiar. So, I asked her if she was new to the school. She told me that she wasn’t really, but had been on virtual instruction for the last two years, and that this was the first time that she had been in the high school.”

Brown said her immediate reaction was that she would be ill-prepared for the course- particularly AP Biology. Prior to taking that class, it is strongly encouraged that students take Chemistry, but Elora had not. In general, Brown worried about the academic rigor that she had been exposed to leading up to this year, since often times the virtual instruction options are somewhat watered down, and not typically taken by students preparing for an AP-level course.

“She was eager though and told me of her desire to be a paleontologist, so I figured we would just go for it and see what happened!”

“It didn’t take long for me to realize that Elora was exactly where she needed to be, and she certainly wasn’t behind her peers as I had feared. Elora soared through AP Biology. She retained facts and grasped abstract information like no other, and was adept in the lab, too. Elora will excel in whatever she chooses. She is naturally gifted and I feel blessed for the opportunity to impact her learning in the tiniest way!”

Her other instructors are equally in awe of her academic performance at Wayne County High School.

“Elora has, not surprisingly, a near perfect score in College Algebra. She is one of those students that does not need a calculator to do most of the problems. I have witnessed her mathematical thoughts as she shows her work on assignments, and I am amazed at her ability to

critically think as she analyzes problems. I am not surprised that Elora made a perfect score on the ACT, and I am very proud of her,” said WCHS Mathematics Teacher Amy Weston.

WCHS History Teacher Colleen Steele added, “Elora's interests are varied and she excels in all of them. She likes to focus on historical points in an investigative way. In our Campbellsville University History 120 class, we have made several presentations and she researches and presents those topics well! She is such an easy person to talk to and shares her knowledge about other topics in creative ways.”